

State of California

The Resources Agency

Memorandum

Date : August 14, 1998

To : Jean Ladyman
Division of Water Quality
State Water Resources Control Board
901 P Street
Sacramento, California 95812

From : Department of Water Resources

Subject : Proposition 204 funds for Contra Costa Water District Veale Tract Water Quality Problems

The Department of Water Resources supports Contra Costa Water District's project application to the State Water Resources Control Board for a Proposition 204 grant under the Delta Tributary Watershed Program, Phase II. The project proposed by CCWD is a Feasibility Study to develop alternatives for reducing local drainage and discharge of contaminants into CCWD's drinking water supply from the Rock Slough watershed.

There are a number of sources of agricultural drainage into Rock Slough, including one discharge from 1,100 acres of farmland on Veale Tract. Historical measurements of electrical conductivity and chloride concentrations show high salinity levels in Rock Slough during some wet periods when Delta flows are high and other sources of salinity, such as seawater intrusion, are very small. There have been times when the chloride concentrations at the Rock Slough intake have approached the Rock Slough municipal and industrial water quality standard of 150 mg/L in the State Water Resources Control Board's May 1995 Water Quality Control Plan. For example, the chloride at Pumping Plant #1 during March, 1996 reached 128 mg/L when that in Old River near Rock Slough was under 50 mg/L. These increases are attributable to local drainage.


Increased bromide and total organic carbon concentrations resulting from the local drainage also increase the production of disinfection by-products when the water from Rock Slough is treated for drinking water use. This will make it more difficult for CCWD to meet more stringent State and federal drinking water standards that are likely to be promulgated in the future. The local drainage may also lead to higher pathogen concentrations such as *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*, and other contaminants that are of concern to public health and the health of the local Delta ecosystem.

Jean Ladyman

AUG 14 1998
Page Two

CCWD's proposal is part of a Rock Slough/Contra Costa Canal Watershed Management Initiative to reduce pollutant loads at municipal water intakes in the Delta. The proposed work is to pinpoint the sources and magnitudes of contaminant loading and to identify and quantify the costs and benefits of mitigation alternatives. It is an important step towards improving water quality in the Delta for urban use and aquatic species. This approach is also consistent with the source control actions proposed in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program common program.

DWR offers technical support and expertise to CCWD as part of this important project. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Spence DWR's Chief of Project Operations Planning Branch at (916) 574-2722.



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